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ABSTRACT

The low fertility of Western industrial nations is likely to become a permanent condition; in the absence of immigration, populations with below-replacement fertility will eventually decline in size. But at the same time fertility is declining, international migration to the West is accelerating. Legal immigration to the United States rose from about 300,000 per year in the early 1960s to more than 570,000 per year in the early 1980s; the United States is now accepting nearly twice as many immigrants and refugees as all other nations combined. Immigration from Third World countries contributes to population growth in the following ways: (1) the addition of the immigrants themselves; and (2) immigrant fertility, which is often higher than native fertility. A stationary population, characterized by a fixed size and an unchanging age-sex structure, is forming in the United States; the indigenous population is diminishing, and a new population of immigrants and their descendants is emerging. This is evidenced by America's Hispanic population, which is growing three times faster than the total population. The potential for further change in the ethnic, racial, and linguistic balances of national populations is perhaps greater in Europe than in the United States. Concerns have been raised that immigrants are failing to adapt to the culture of their new home: increasingly immigrants are the focus of tension and the targets of abuse and violence. Recommendations for public policy are suggested. A list of references is included. (BJV)

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IMPACTS OF IMMIGRATION IN CALIFORNIA

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POPULATION REPLACEMENT AND IMMIGRANT ADAPTATION: NEW ISSUES FACING THE WEST

By Thomas J. Espenshade[1]

Industrial nations of the West are entering a new stage in the demographic transition from high birth rates to low birth rates, and as they do new concerns are being raised about the need to rethink policies toward immigration and toward immigrants themselves. Rates of natural increase are wearing thin and the proportion of total population growth due to immigration is rising, leading to new questions about the processes of immigrant adjustment and adaptation. This article considers some implications of continued low fertility with net immigration, and suggests a strategy for resolving an emerging demographic dilemma facing today's industrial democracies.

Since 1965 fertility rates in many of these countries have fallen substantially below the level needed to replace their populations in the long run. For example, prior to 1972, fertility rates in the United States were consistently above replacement. The only exception occurred during a few years in the middle of the Great Depression, and with the recrudescence in native fertility following the Second World War this brief episode was quickly forgotten. After the war, U.S. period total fertility rates peaked during the

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late 1950s and declined only slightly to 3.7 by 1960. But they fell sharply to 2.5 by 1970 and then in 1972 dropped below the level of 2.1 needed for replacement. U.S. fertility rates have remained below replacement ever since and have shown little tendency to deviate from an essentially flat trend line of 1.8 lifetime births per woman.

Fertility levels in other industrial countries have also declined precipitously. A review of these trends can be found in Teitelbaum and Winter (1985) and in Wattenberg and Zinsmeister (1985). By the mid-1980s total fertility rates averaged 1.8 in northern Europe and 1.5 in western Europe, including levels as low as 1.3 in Denmark and West Germany (Population Reference Bureau, 1986). Moreover, there seems to be little hope for a sharp reversal anytime soon.

At the same time fertility was declining, international migration to the West--much of it from Third World countries--was accelerating, both in terms of absolute numbers and as a proportion of total population growth. Though not recognized as such at the time, these international movements were to become one of the most important demographic changes of the period (Teitelbaum and Winter, 1985). Immigration to Great Britain and the Netherlands was spurred by decolonization, to Sweden, France, and West Germany by various guest worker programs designed to alleviate labor shortages in the 1950s and 1960s, and to the United States and Canada by immigration reforms in the 1960s that ended discrimination against entrants from non-European countries.

In 1970 the foreign-born share of total U.S. population equalled 4.7 percent, but low birth rates coupled with growing levels of immigration in the following decade boosted the share to 6.2 percent by 1980 (Economic Report of the President, 1986). Legal immigration to the United States rose from about

300,000 per year in the early 1960s to more than 570,000 per year in the first half of the 1980s (Bouvier and Gardner, 1986), and recent estimates suggest that the United States is now accepting nearly twice as many immigrants and refugees as all other nations combined (Lamm and Imhoff, 1985). The contribution of net immigration to total U.S. population growth also accelerated over this period, from 12.5 percent in 1960-64 to 28.4 percent by 1980-85 (Bouvier and Gardner, 1986).[2] So far in the 1980s five of every six legal U.S. immigrants have come from Latin America (35 percent) or Asia (48 percent), while the European proportion has dropped to 11 percent (Bouvier and Gardner, 1986).

When immigration is predominantly from Third World countries it contributes to population growth in two ways: through the addition of the immigrants themselves and from the fact that immigrant fertility is often higher than native fertility. West Germany registered natural increase of 366,300 in 1965 when the excess of births over deaths among the native German population was 334,000, and among immigrant workers, 32,300. But by 1975, natural increase had turned negative. Births among the native population lagged deaths by 235,600, whereas the surplus among immigrants rose to 99,000. Thus immigration and natural increase among immigrants were the only positive components of demographic change in West Germany. Similarly in France, of total population growth between 1950 and 1975 of 11 million, 7 million was due to immigration and 4 million to natural increase. Since 1975 nearly all of the growth in the French population has been due to higher birth rates among immigrant North Africans (Carlson, 1985).

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2. Data for 1980-85 include an allowance of 200,000 per year for net illegal immigration, not included in earlier years, and estimated legal emigration is assumed to be 160,000 a year, increased from 36,000 a year for earlier data.

Teitelbaum and Winter (1985) draw attention to the demographic significance of low fertility in the presence of immigration:

> The convergence of the baby bust with the growth of international migration has led to a new demographic phenomenon of great relevance to debates about population decline. Put simply, the combination of record-low fertility and high immigration (especially from countries of higher fertility than the receiving countries) means that immigration must account for a large and increasing proportion of Western population growth (pp. 91-92).

The demographic dilemma facing western industrial nations becomes clear if one assumes that their low fertility is likely to become a permanent condition. In the absence of immigration, populations with continued below-replacement fertility will eventually decline in size, but depending upon their current age structures such declines may begin soon or be delayed until well into the 21st century. And if immigration is encouraged for the sake of numerical stability, it often leads to changes in the ethnic, racial, cultural, and linguistic composition of populations--changes that some people believe are sources of concern. In western Europe, where these compositional changes are occurring more quickly than in the United States, concern has frequently been intensified, especially where traditional white majority populations have felt threatened by the prospect of being displaced by other peoples. For this reason, Teitelbaum and Winter (1985) comment: "Recent developments in France and Germany once more highlight the extent to which the matters raised [here] go far deeper than the administrative and technical, touching sensitive and important political issues likely to cloud and complicate present and future policy debates" (p. 120).

Demographic Implications

Some writers disagree that low fertility in industrial countries is here to stay. Easterlin (1980), for example, argues that fertility will rise in the

1990s when the small baby bust cohorts of the late 1960s and 1970s enter adulthood. And Ahlburg (1983), using the Easterlin model, predicts a climb from 3.3 million U.S. births in 1978 to 4.6 million in 1997.

Most demographers, however, expect that fertility in developed countries will remain low. McIntosh (1983) attributes these trends to "the convergence of a number of social revolutions, each of which exerts an antinatalist effect" (p. 229). Isolating the rising economic costs and declining economic rewards of childrearing, Huber (1980) and Folbre (1983) argue that fertility is likely to go even lower. The prevailing consensus in the United States, and by extension perhaps in other western industrial nations as well, is summed up best by Westoff (1986):

> When we consider [the basic social forces that underlay the historical decline in fertility] and observe that fertility in the United States has been declining for two centuries (with the exception of the baby boom, which may indeed have been the demographic aberration), and when we see similar and even more extreme declines in other Western countries in recent decades, the conclusion that fertility appears destined to remain low seems inescapable. The greater uncertainty appears to be how low it will fall (pp. 558-559).[3]

Populations will eventually decrease in size if they exhibit below-replacement fertility and zero net immigration over a long period. For

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3. It is worth mentioning that, in western industrial democracies, government efforts to reverse undesirable fertility trends have been notably unsuccessful. Many of these countries have progressive systems of child allowances, designed partly with a pronatalist intent. In West Germany, for example, the monthly child allowance in 1982 was DM 50 for the first child, DM 100 for the second child, DM 220 for the third, and DM 240 for the fourth or higher-order child (Teitelbaum and Winter, 1985). Despite this program, fertility in West Germany is the lowest in the world. Nor are western nations likely to do much more in the future. With reference to France, Sweden, and West Germany, McIntosh (1983) observes that "the evidence suggests that the 1980s are unlikely to see the adoption of strong, broadly based and coordinated policies intended to stimulate fertility" (p. 224). Part of her reasoning is that an effective program would be prohibitively expensive. In addition, a "muted sense of nationalism" has prevented any strong feeling of urgency over the need to stimulate the birth rate.

example, when the 1982 U.S. population is projected assuming zero net immigration, an ultimate total fertility rate of 1.9 lifetime births per woman, and life expectancy at birth reaching 81.0 years in 2080, total population size grows from 232.1 million persons in 1982 to a maximum of 275.4 million by the year 2025, and then begins a long-term decline (Spencer, 1984). In contrast, a population that has fixed mortality and below-replacement fertility together with a constant (and nonzero) annual number and age-sex composition of net immigrants will eventually become a stationary population with a fixed size and an unchanging age-sex structure (Espenshade, Bouvier, and Arthur, 1982). The size and other characteristics of this stationary population do not depend on the size or the age-sex structure of the initial population, but only on the underlying assumptions about future fertility, mortality, and immigration. With a total fertility rate of 2.0 and 1 million annual net immigrants, U.S. population size would eventually reach a stationary total of nearly 1.2 billion persons. On the other hand, its ultimate size would be just 36.3 million with a total fertility rate of 1.5 and 250,000 annual net immigrants.[4]

While a stationary population is forming, the indigenous population diminishes because its fertility rates are too low to replace it, and a new population of immigrants and their descendants emerges. This new population consists of a series of smaller stationary populations—one of immigrants, one of their first-generation native-born descendants, one of their second-

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4. These and other tabulated data for a range of fertility and immigration assumptions are contained in Espenshade (1983). Different combinations of fertility and immigration levels can lead to the same size for a stationary population. For a discussion of this issue, see Espenshade and Bouvier (1982).

generation native-born descendants, and so on. Total population size eventually becomes stationary provided fertility rates are below replacement.[5]

Evidence that the kinds of compositional changes just described are already occurring in the United States is contained in recent projections of the Hispanic population. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the Hispanic population of the United States is growing three times faster than the total population, and by the year 2080 may comprise 19 percent of U.S. residents—up from 7 percent in 1982 (Spencer, 1986).[6] The white non-Hispanic population, which now accounts for 79 percent of the total, is projected to drop to 74 percent in the year 2000, to 66 percent in 2030, and to 57 percent in 2080. The white non-Hispanic population may peak in size by the year 2020 and then steadily decrease. Furthermore, in the middle-series projections of total U.S. population prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, post-1982 surviving immigrants and their descendants make up 9.7 percent of total population by 2030 and 20.3 percent by 2080 (Spencer, 1984). These compositional changes would occur more quickly if immigrants and their near-term descendants were assumed to have higher fertility than the "native" population.[7]

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5. A more detailed discussion of the dynamic processes of population change that accompany the introduction of immigration and low fertility can be found in Espenshade (1987).

6. Of course, by the year 2080 "Hispanic" may not have the same social meaning as today, just as "Italian" or "Jewish" ethnic groups are perceived quite differently today than 100 years ago. To some extent the changing social definition of former immigrant groups can be attributed to the character of the adjustments that immigrants and their descendants made to life in the United States.

7. To keep things in perspective, Gibson (1975) showed that an estimated 27.8 percent of the 1970 total U.S. population was post-1870 surviving immigrants and their descendants. On the other hand, immigration and natural increase among immigrants are projected under the middle series to account for 80.1 percent of total U.S. population growth between 1982 and 2080 (Spencer, 1984); the comparable figure for the 100 years from 1870 to 1970 is 34.5

(Footnote 7 Continued on Next Page

Social Issues

If fertility in western industrial nations remains low, three broad conclusions follow. First, although immigration-related changes in the ethnic, racial, and linguistic balances of both the U.S. and western European populations are already underway, in the short run at least, the potential for further change in these and other compositional aspects of national populations is perhaps greater in Europe than in the United States not only because most European populations are less diverse to begin with but also because Europe did not experience a baby boom after the Second World War that matched that in the United States, either in terms of magnitude or duration. As a result, European populations do not have age distributions with the same degree of built-in momentum for future population growth, and therefore they lack a "protective mantle of natural increase" that softens and to some extent obscures recompositional trends tied to immigration.[8]

Second, countries with below-replacement fertility need immigrants—if not now, then eventually—if they do not wish to decline. Without immigrants, many populations in the West would soon stop growing, temporarily reach zero population growth, and then begin to decline. Not only would population decline bring with it sharply older age distributions and correspondingly higher old-age dependency burdens than the ones that exist presently, it could also slow and possibly even reverse the trend of increasing specialization of human capital thereby making the management of economic growth more uncertain.

(Footnote 7 Continued from Previous Page)
percent (Gibson, 1975). The sharp contrast between the two periods is explained by the substantially lower fertility assumed throughout the next century.

8. To my knowledge, this "protective mantle" metaphor owes its origins to Peter Morrison (1978).

With immigrants, these countries can maintain demographic stability at any level indefinitely.[9]

Third, as noted above, populations that have both immigration and low fertility for a prolonged period exhibit a kind of demographic transfusion. The indigenous population and its descendants eventually diminish under the pressure of below-replacement fertility and are succeeded by a new population of immigrants and their descendants. Whether these developments are likely to trigger policy concerns depends on the individual context in which immigration arises and, in particular, on how much like the indigenous population the immigrants and their descendants either are or subsequently become.

To develop this last point, it is useful to distinguish three immigration contexts. The first is a hypothetical one in which below-replacement fertility, mortality, and the annual volume of immigration have been constant for a sufficiently long time that an essentially stationary population has been in existence for at least a lifetime. If this stationary population is now taken as the "starting" population and if immigration continues, the starting population and its later descendants will diminish and be replaced by a new population of immigrants and their descendants. But as long as the level and composition of the immigrant flows do not change, there will be no apparent change in either the size or the composition of the overall stationary population. The fact that one population is being replaced by another will hardly be noticed and is therefore unlikely to arouse policy concerns.

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9. Coale (1986) has shown that the main effect of continued immigration through the year 2100 is to boost the size of the U.S. population over what it would be without immigration. Immigration has a smaller effect in checking the aging process that accompanies prolonged below-replacement fertility.

In the second case a population begins to take in immigrants in substantial numbers, after having had relatively little recent experience with migration. This situation is approximated by several western European countries today. A third case arises when a country with a lengthy history of immigration finds that the source of that immigration has suddenly changed. The United States provides a contemporary example because the countries sending immigrants to the United States shifted from Europe to Asia and Latin America following U.S. immigration reforms in 1965 that did away with country quotas.

In the latter two circumstances, population replacement can be a source of growing concern. Carlson (1986) believes that the potential for an immigrant backlash exists in the United States. He cautions, "If [immigration and low fertility] continue over the next several decades, it is folly to assume that there will not be major political and cultural consequences. Among other things, conditions would be ripe for a latter-day wave of passionate, possibly ugly nativist and xenophobic reaction" (p. C2). An example from California might be viewed as lending partial support to Carlson's prediction. In a recent city council election in Monterey Park, a small Los Angeles suburb, three incumbent minority Americans--the nation's first female Chinese-American mayor and her two Latino colleagues--lost to three Anglos. According to news accounts, an immigrant backlash seems to have been a dominant factor. Two of the winners championed English as the official city and state language, and one of the victors was quoted as saying, "The American people, as friendly and as generous and as flexible as they are, have come to a point in the road where they want proof that their rights and their dreams are not all going to be replaced" (Mathews, 1986, p. A3).

A more significant development with potentially far-reaching implications occurred in November 1986 when California voters passed Proposition 63 by an overwhelming margin of nearly three to one. Proposition 63 amends the State constitution to declare that English is the official language of the State of California, and it requires the Legislature and State officials to take all steps necessary to insure that the role of English as the common language of the State is preserved and enhanced. Similar ballot initiatives are underway in Florida and in some southwestern states with growing immigrant populations. Early in 1986 the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (1986) spoke out against "English as the official language" resolutions, calling them a reflection of "our worst fears, not our best values" (p. 2). Whether one agrees with Proposition 63 or not, the strong support it received manifests a widespread perception in California that immigrants and their children are failing to learn English and perhaps to adjust to American society in other ways as well.

Related concerns about the adaptability of immigrants are beginning to surface in Europe. Most of the reaction in West Germany has been muted. But in the surprisingly direct "Heidelberg Manifesto", a group of 15 prominent German professors in 1982 called for the repatriation of immigrants in West Germany:

> It is with grave concern that we observe the infiltration of the German nation by millionfold waves of foreigners and their families, the infiltration of our language, our culture, and our national characteristics by foreign influences....The integration of large masses of non-German foreigners and the preservation of our nation thus cannot be achieved simultaneously; it will lead to the well-known ethnic catastrophes of multicultural societies....For the Federal Republic of Germany, which is one of the most heavily populated countries of the world, the return of the foreigners to their native lands will provide ecological as well as social relief (Teitelbaum and Winter, 1985, pp. 176-178).

Negative reaction to immigrants has been more extreme in France where it became a political issue in the Parliamentary elections in March 1986. Jean-Marie Le Pen, an outspoken candidate for the far-right National Front, blamed immigrants for taking away jobs and causing crime, and campaigned on the slogan "2 million immigrants equals 2 million unemployed" (Echikson, 1986, p. 13). Having scored just 1 percent in public opinion polls a few years ago, the National Front received 9.7 percent of the vote in the Parliamentary elections and succeeded in moving the immigrant question to the top of the national agenda. In an interview, Le Pen was quoted as saying, "The problem for Europe is a question of survival as a civilization. If we do not reverse the current of immigration, we will be swept away" (Markham, 1986, p. A6).

Similar accounts could be recited in other countries. But whether these stories refer to Asians in Canada, Caribbean blacks in Great Britain, or Surinamese in Holland, the theme is almost always the same. Increasingly, immigrants are the focus of tension and often the targets of abuse and violence. Many whites, fearful of becoming a minority in their own country, share Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's concern about being "swamped" by outsiders (Markham, 1986). Fears arise not only because of the large volume of immigration and its contribution to population growth, but also because immigrants and their offspring often have fertility rates higher than those of the indigenous population. The fact that many of these newer immigrants are culturally and ethnically distinct from the native population also complicates policy alternatives (Teitelbaum and Winter, 1985).

The preceding discussion delineates the emerging dilemma confronting policy makers in developed countries with immigration and low fertility. Because fertility rates are at levels that are insufficient to replace these

populations in the long run and because there is little hope that they will rise above replacement anytime soon, immigrants will be needed for their contribution to demographic stability. At the same time, the public's dissatisfaction over the presence of a large and growing immigrant community typically swells as the proportion of total population growth attributable to immigration rises. It is for this reason that many writers doubt that an "immigration solution" to fears of population decline will prove to be politically acceptable. Teitelbaum and Winter (1985), for example, conclude: "It seems doubtful, therefore, whether large-scale immigration can ever serve as a politically viable response to declining population over a considerable period of years, unless the immigrant streams are considered similar in character to the indigenous population" (p. 150).

Recommendations

Because it is federal policy to admit large numbers of new immigrants each year, the U.S. government should at the same time be paying more attention to what happens to immigrants once they have entered the country, to how well immigrants are able to adjust to life in the United States, and to what can be done by the host population to facilitate this adjustment. Our society should take steps to ensure that a situation does not develop where minority immigrant populations comprise a permanent underclass existing "at the margins of white tolerance" (Markham, 1986). Immigrants and their children must be enabled and encouraged to move into the mainstream of society and to participate fully and equally in its economic, social, and political institutions.

Implementing these objectives requires confronting the perception that recent immigrants are having a difficult time adjusting. In particular, added energy and resources are needed in four areas. First, improved information is

needed on the speed of adjustment of different immigrant groups along economic, social, demographic, and political dimensions. These dimensions encompass issues of employment, earnings, and job mobility; education, occupation, English-language proficiency, and social mobility; fertility, family structure, and residential segregation; and political participation. A detailed picture of how disparate immigrant groups in the United States compare in terms of their demonstrated success in adapting to their new surroundings is currently missing.

Second, the experiences of immigrants in various parts of the United States need to be examined to determine if immigrant adjustment is mainly a function of an immigrant's individual characteristics and endowments such as education, work experience, and country of origin, or if the structural composition of the community in which an immigrant settles exerts a stronger influence. Regions of special interest include southern and northern California, Florida, Texas, the New York metropolitan area, Chicago, Denver, and Washington, D.C.—all areas with large immigrant communities.

Third, historical studies are needed that will compare the processes of immigrant adaptation at the beginning of the 20th century with contemporary processes to assess whether immigrants are having a harder time adjusting today than they did three-quarters of a century ago. Fourth, it is important to begin to identify the facilitators and barriers to immigrant adaptation and to determine what policy steps may be needed to overcome obstacles to immigrant adjustment.

Concluding Remarks

Objective information in these four areas would contribute to several important goals: (1) sensitizing U.S. policy makers to issues related to

immigrant adjustment and adaptation; (2) assisting policy makers in formulating effective policies and programs for new immigrants by illuminating policy choices; and (3) increasing public awareness of how immigrant adjustment processes work in order to neutralize the kinds of nativist tendencies already evident in some western European countries and beginning to emerge in the United States.

Some countries are farther along than others in thinking seriously about policies to ease the transition of immigrants to a new environment. In Sweden, for example, an immigrant and minority policy enacted in the mid-1970s provides for equality between immigrants and the native population, cultural freedom of choice for immigrants and minorities, and a partnership among all communities. The 1972 Swedish Lessons Act requires employers to give 240 hours of paid leave of absence to every foreign national who does not know Swedish in order to learn the language. Employers are obligated to pay wages for the duration of these studies even if lessons take place outside normal working hours (Swedish Ministry of Labor, 1984). Finally, the fact that Sweden has a cabinet minister for Migration Affairs illustrates the importance Swedes attach to issues surrounding international migration.

By contrast, although the United States has an explicit immigration policy, it does not have an explicit immigrant policy. U.S. immigration policy consists in large measure of a simple gate-keeping function of determining who is and who is not eligible for entry. Once immigrants have been admitted, the federal government acts as though its responsibility to them has ended. These features of U.S. immigration policy were reinforced by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. This bill aims to stem the flow of undocumented immigrants into the United States and to reduce the number of illegal aliens

already here by penalizing employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens, legalizing undocumented immigrants who can demonstrate continuous residence in the United States since January 1, 1982, strengthening the Border Patrol, and granting temporary resident status to undocumented farmworkers who can show they worked at least 90 days in U.S. agriculture in the twelve-month period before May 1, 1986. A missing component, however, of the latest round of U.S. immigration reform is any initiative by either the public or the private sector to address the adjustment of newly legalized immigrants to their new surroundings.

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